

Second Grade Newsletter

OCTOBER 2011

Dear Parents,

October is "mystery month". This is always a favorite theme for the students. Our class will take on the role of F.B.I.'s (Famous Breton Investigators) in our content areas. This month we will be reading several mysteries. During reading workshop the students will learn the elements of mysteries and become familiar with the following terms: scene of the crime, suspects, problem, clues, and evidence. We hope to encourage the student's ability to be keen observers, make predictions, and brainstorm ways to solve cases. We will continue to emphasize character analysis and drawing conclusions as we read.

Homework seems to be going great. Please give us any feedback you might have. Also, please let us know if you are having a hard time finding books that your student enjoys reading. We would be happy to help in this area. Remember that the book order offers inexpensive books that students might find appealing. We stress at school the only way to become a better reader is to read, read, read, read, read, read, read, read, read, and read.

Reading We are working on assessing your child and will begin to group students according to their reading level for small group reading instruction. Our goal is to meet the needs of each student at their reading level and continue to develop their abilities. The children are doing a fine job of selecting books. They are aware of books that are "easy" "just right" or a "challenge" for them to read. During the workshop time a mini lesson is presented that teaches a strategy or gives some insight into reading. The students then spend time reading and we take time to share what we have read or give examples that support the mini lesson. I can tell they are "hooked on their books" when a quiet hum comes over the classroom.

Writing We make daily connections between reading and writing as we model powerful language through stories we share in our mini lessons as well as read alouds. Our class has worked on procedures during the workshop such as dating each entry, writing on every other line to allow space for editing. We have discussed topic selection. We encourage the children to write about personal experiences.

Spelling

We engage kids in a variety of activities to strengthen their spelling abilities. You can support your child by reviewing the highlighted words on the list we give you at parent information night. They also have their weekly lists that they need to study at home.

Math

We are hoping to increase "fact power" for all children. Some ways you can help practice the facts at home would be to play **War**, each partner draws two cards and calls out the sum. Partners decided before hand if the high or low sum wins. **Dice toss**, where the dice are rolled and the sum is stated ie. $4+2=6$. Encourage your child to say the higher number first and then count on. In the example above the child would say 4, 5-6, rather than counting all the dots. With enough practice, as the same numbers come up your child will begin to learn that combination.

We will be doing some pumpkin math. Please send a small pumpkin about the size of a softball to school.

Pumpkin Needed

Science The children are learning a great deal about seeds, plant parts and their functions. We are very excited for the upcoming field trip to the Farmer's Market.

Social Studies We are studying rules, laws and community. We are learning so much about the way our government works and we loved our visit from the new Mayor.

Special Notes: Red alert folders- the children are doing a great job of bringing their folders home each day. Please check these nightly for special notes, or other homework such as the following:

Homework Notebook

Study spelling words by doing a spelling activity

Practice math facts (Mad Minute Test usually each week)

Book Orders

Please look over the book order with your child. (This should be coming home in red alert folders each month). The book companies offer some terrific savings. Maybe you would like to give a book as a special treat for a cousin or special friend. We can hold books for you to pick up if you would like to have them for a present. Please put your name and HOLD at the bottom of the order form. Enclose the checks (payable to the company) or cash in an envelope with your child's name. The book order is due **Friday, October. 14**. Thanks so much for your support.

Important Dates to Remember:

Friday, October 7

Field trip to Farmer's Market in the AM

Monday, October 31

Halloween Party

(after last recess, 2:15 p.m.)

Thursday, Nov. 3

Parent/teacher Conferences 4-7 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 8

Parent/teacher Conferences 4-7 p.m.

Wednesday, November 30th

2nd grade Pow-Wow

Needed:

- Michael's 40% coupons found in the Sunday edition of the Grand Rapids Press
- Altoid containers
- Authentic feathers for the Pow-Wow on November 30th.

As always please feel free to contact us with questions, concerns, or information regarding your child. Communication between home and school is important to us and to the success of your child. Thank you.

Lisa Eldersveld, Cinny Gould, Lori Dood, Cristyn Dunteman (Dood's student teacher)

